

## From the PESB: Cases to Illustrate Disconnect Between SAM and New Performance-Based System of Teacher Certification and Ongoing Professional Development.\*

Ellen is a teacher certified under Washington's pre-2000 certification system. As such, she received her second-level, continuing, certificate when she completed her master's degree in her fourth year as a teacher. This made her eligible for a base salary in the MA+0 column of the allocation schedule. Her husband, Rick, holds the same certificate, but attained it by accumulating 45 post-baccalaureate credits of higher education coursework. In contrast, John is certified under Washington's new, performance-based certification system. He is working toward the professional certificate, and the "core" of his program involves a variety of classroom- and district-based professional development, activities that do not earn clock hours, and 15 post-baccalaureate higher education credits. Like many educators, he believes the professional certificate process is more rigorous than the previous system, but also more relevant to the needs of his students and professionally rewarding. He knows, however, that when he finishes, in his fourth year of teaching, he will only be eligible for the BA+15 column on the allocation schedule, a full \$1,793 to \$4,859 below the levels of the BA+45 or MA+0 columns respectively. He doesn't understand why compensation associated with this new performance-based system is still based on courses and credits instead of attainment of defined standards.

Carol and Beth are both mid-career professionals who made decisions to pursue a second career in teaching. Both possess a bachelor's degree, and each participated, and successfully completed, an alternative route to teacher certification program. In completing the program, Carol's program required that she earn 27 credits, while Beth's program required 68, although cost less to complete. They are baffled by the fact that although they have met equivalent certification standards, Carol will fall at the BA+15 levels on the salary allocation model, while Beth will enter at the BA+45 level, representing a \$1,537 difference in salary eligibility.

To renew her certificate and move up another notch on the salary schedule, Ann completed 15 quarter credit hours of coursework at a state university. Joan's certificate must be renewed by next fall, but neither her service as a beginning teacher mentor, nor her supervision of student teachers earns her the clock hours or credits needed. Craig is experiencing similar frustrations because Craig has spent an enormous amount of time serving on the district's reading curriculum committee, and secured grant funding for a classroom-based action research project that has had a huge impact on the school's reading achievement, but he can't receive clock hours credits towards certificate renewal or salary increase for this important work. The principal at Joan and Craig's school feels that their professional development activities have been valuable, relevant sources of professional growth for each of them, and of great benefit to the school and district. But both Joan and Craig will have to cut back on this work, however, and quickly seek out credit- and clock-hour awarding courses in order to keep their certificates and increase their pay. Both receive consistent praise and affirmation of their excellent teaching and leadership skills, but are becoming frustrated that the system does not recognize or reward their efforts.

*\* Figures based on the 2002-2003 K-12 Salary Allocation Table for Certificated Instructional Staff.*